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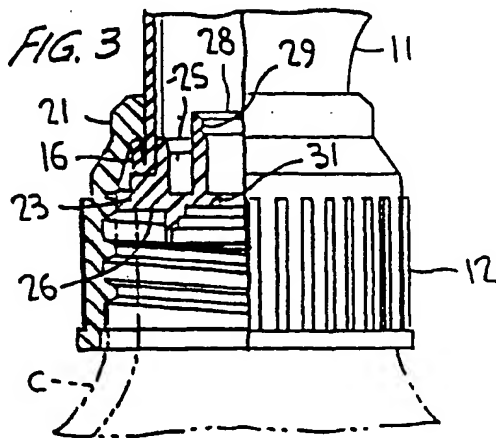
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(54) Dispenser

(57) A dispenser (10) has its closure cap (12) non-removably affixed to a cylindrical attaching portion (11) of its dispenser body by a snap-fit engagement between a folded lower end section (16) of the attaching portion (11) and the closure (12) or a plug (22, 35, 43) located

within the closure (12) and in engagement with the attaching portion (11). The folded lower end section (16) presents an end edge (21) facing outwardly of the closure (12) which engages an inwardly facing end wall (18) of the closure (12) or of the plug (22, 35, 43).



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Description

Background of the invention

This invention relates generally to a dispenser to which a closure cap is non-removably fixed. A folded lower end section of a cylindrical attaching portion of the dispenser defines an end edge facing outwardly of the closure to facilitate the fixing of the closure cap by a snap-fit engagement either with the closure cap or with a plug located within and in engagement with the closure.

Manually operated pump dispensers are mounted on containers of liquid to be dispensed by a container closure either having internal threads engaging the threads on the bottle neck, or a ferrule engaging a bead on the container neck. The closure cap is mounted on the dispenser body such that the dispenser may be mounted to the liquid filled container by simply threading down the closure cap on the bottle neck or by swaging the cap in place.

The closure cap is mounted to a generally cylindrical attaching portion of the dispenser body as, for example, with the use of a hollow sleeve having an external flange engaging an internal retention lip at one end of the closure. The sleeve extends into the cylindrical attaching portion and is frictionally held in place. However, such a mounting assembly may prove unreliable as the frictional engagement can fail during extended periods of use.

Otherwise, the cylindrical attaching portion may have an external molded flange such that the internal retention lip on the closure cap makes a snap fit engagement with the flange for retaining the closure cap in place. However, this approach can be capital intensive in that the cylindrical attaching portion of the dispenser body must be specially molded.

Summary of the invention

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a dispenser having a closure cap non-removably affixed to the cylindrical attaching portion thereof, in a simple and economical yet highly effective manner without the need for special molding.

In accordance with the invention a lower end section of the cylindrical attaching portion of the pump body is folded, inwardly or outwardly, to define an end edge facing outwardly of the closure. The folded lower end section is snap-fitted to either the closure or to a plug which engages the closure. When snap-fitted in place, the end edge engages a retention lip at one end of the closure, or engages an edge wall on the plug which faces inwardly of the closure.

When utilized with a dispenser having a hollow piston stem reciprocable along the central axis of the cylindrical attaching portion of the pump body, the plug may be provided with container vent means cooperating

with the piston stem for controlling the container vent function during piston reciprocation. And, a transverse wall of the plug having a central opening through which the piston stem extends may have means at the central opening defining a container vent path.

Other objects, advantages and novel features of the invention will become more apparent from the following detailed description of the invention when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

Brief description of the drawings

Figure 1 is a side elevational view of one embodiment according to the invention, partly broken away, of a dispenser and a container closure, shown in expanded view;

Figure 2 is an expanded view, partially in vertical section, of the attaching portion of the dispenser, the closure and a plug, in expanded view, prior to assembly, according to the Fig. 1 embodiment;

Figure 3 is a view similar to Figure 2 showing the closure non-removably fixed to the dispenser body; Figure 4 is an expanded view of a disassembled attaching portion and closure according to another embodiment of the invention;

Figure 5 is a view similar to Figure 4 showing a plug as part of the assembly with the lower end section of the attaching portion folded inwardly, according to the Fig. 4 embodiment;

Figure 6 is a view similar to Figure 5 of parts fully assembled together;

Figure 7 is an expanded view of a further embodiment according to the invention, in vertical section, of the attaching portion of the dispenser, the closure and a plug, the reciprocable piston stem of the dispenser being shown relative to the attaching portion;

Figure 8 is a view similar to Figure 7 showing the parts assembled together, and the vertically reciprocating piston stem at rest;

Figure 9 is a view similar to Figure 8 with the vertically reciprocable piston stem shown during pumping; and

Figure 10 is a perspective view of the plug according to the Figures 7 to 9 embodiment.

Detailed description of the invention

Turning now to the drawings wherein like reference characters refer to like and corresponding parts throughout the several views, a dispenser 10 is shown in Figure 1 as having a generally cylindrical attaching portion 11 to which a closure cap 12 is non-removably fixed according to one embodiment of the invention. The dispenser may be of the type having a vertically reciprocating piston (not shown) actuated by a trigger lever 13 upon manual actuation. The piston has a hollow stem 14 coaxial with attaching portion 11, the lower end of the

stem extending into the closure cap as shown.

Attaching portion 11 has an inner annular groove presenting a fold line 15 which delimits a lower end section 16. As more clearly shown in Fig. 2, the closure cap has an internal retention lip 17 at one end presenting an inwardly facing end wall 18.

The dispenser including its attaching portion may be of a sufficiently pliable molded plastic construction permitting lower end section 16 to be outwardly folded from its Fig. 1 to its Fig. 2 position about fold line 15 during the assembly operation as with the use of a suitable tool. Movement of the dispenser 10 toward the closure cap 12 completes the fold of the end section 16 as the same bears against the crown portion 19 of cap, or is already fully folded by means of a tool, such that the pliable attaching portion is forced through the central opening of the cap into snap-fitting engagement with retention lip 17.

The outwardly folded lower end section presents an end edge 21 which faces outwardly of the closure and which, in the assembled condition of Fig. 3, engages end wall 18 of the retention lip. The closure cap is thereupon non-removably fixed to the dispenser body to effect mounting of the dispenser to a suitable container C (Fig. 3) as the complementary threads of the closure cap and a bottle neck interengage. Of course, the closure cap can otherwise be in the form of a ferrule which is swaged to the container neck in a manner known in this art.

The snap-fit interengagement of the dispenser attaching portion with the closure cap may be enhanced by the provision of a plug 22 which has several functions as will be described. The plug has a transverse circular wall 23 in tight fitting engagement with the interior of the closure, such that its upwardly facing annular surface 24 bears against the confronting edge of the folded lower end section 16, as shown in Fig. 3.

The plug likewise has an annular sleeve 25 which bears in tight fitting engagement against the inner surface of attaching portion 11. And, an underside annular surface 26 of wall 23 bears directly against the upper edge of the container neck, so as to avoid the need for a separate gasket, depending on the stiffness of the plug.

Transverse wall 23 of the plug has a central opening 27 through which piston stem 14 extends, and has an upstanding inner sleeve 28 with one or more vertical grooves 29 on its inner surface forming vent grooves. Otherwise, vent ribs could be provided as the full equivalent of vent grooves.

The circular edge at central opening 27 can be either oversized relative to the piston stem or, more preferably, is notched as at 31 so as to establish a vent path from outside to the interior of the container during pumping. This vent path is sealed closed by a vent seal 32 (Fig. 1) which, in the at rest position of the pump, seals against the confronting inner surface of sleeve 28. At or near the end of the piston compression stroke, vent seal 32 engages vent grooves 29 for venting the container

to atmosphere to prevent hydraulic lock and container collapse.

In accordance with another embodiment of the invention, shown in Figs. 4, 5 and 6, attaching portion 11 has an external annular groove presenting a fold line 33 which delimits lower end section 16. The end section of this embodiment is notched as at 31 to facilitate an inner folding of the end section as shown in Fig. 5 as with the use of a suitable tool.

During assembly, the closure cap and attaching portion 11 are moved toward one another along the central axis thereof such that portion 11 seats against conical surface 34, as shown in Fig. 6. A plug 35 is inserted into the closure cap from below, the plug having a transverse wall 36 engaging end wall 18 of retention lip 17. An annular sleeve 37 of the plug has formed on its outer surface an annular undercut presenting an edge wall 38.

In the assembled condition of Fig. 6, lower end section 16 is snap-fitted to plug 35 as end edge 21 engages edge wall 38. The plug therefore effects engagement between the dispenser and the closure, and likewise functions as a gasket overlying the upper edge of the container neck. Also, the plug has an inner sleeve 39 with a vent seal 41 in sliding sealing engagement with piston stem 14 in the Fig. 1 at rest position. During pumping, the sealing action with the piston stem is broken as the vent seal engages vent ribs 42 (Fig. 6) or vent grooves (not shown) on piston stem 14. The container is therefore vented to atmosphere during pumping in a simple and effective manner.

In accordance with a further embodiment of the invention, Figs. 7 to 10, lower end section 16 is folded outwardly as in the Figs. 1 to 3 embodiment, except that the folded lower end section is, in the assembled condition of Fig. 8, snap-fitted to plug 43. Annular wall 44 of the plug snugly embraces the interior of the closure cap, and top surface 45 thereof engages retention bead 18 of the closure cap. The annular wall 44 also comprises an internal retention lip 47 at one end having an inwardly facing end wall 46; in the assembled condition of Fig. 9, the outwardly folded lower portion 16 engages end wall 46 of the retention lip 47.

An outer upstanding skirt 48, integral with transverse wall 49, snugly embraces the inner surface of attaching portion 11, and forms an open annular groove 51 for the reception of outwardly folded end section 16, as shown.

An inner skirt 52 on transverse wall 49 has one or more vertical vent grooves 53 formed on its inner surface, as more clearly shown in Fig. 10. And, notches 31 are formed at the edge of central opening 27 of transverse wall 49, similarly as in Fig. 3. Thus, during pumping, as the piston stem is raised at or near the end or the pressure stroke, the vent seal engages vertical grooves 53 to open the vent path through which atmospheric air enters the container. And, as in the other embodiments, plug 43 overlies the open of the bottle neck and can function as a gasket without the need for a sep-

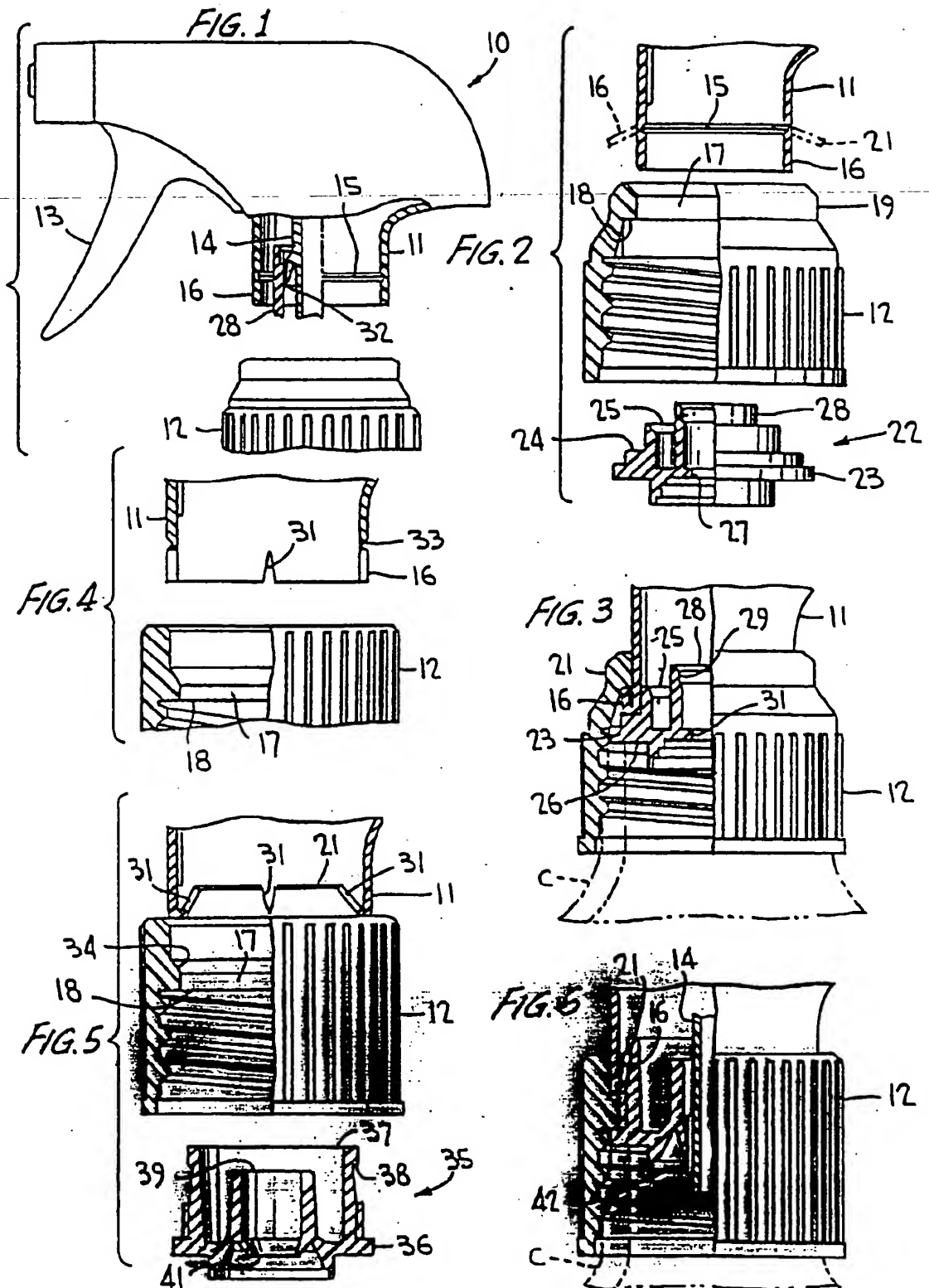
arate gasket element.

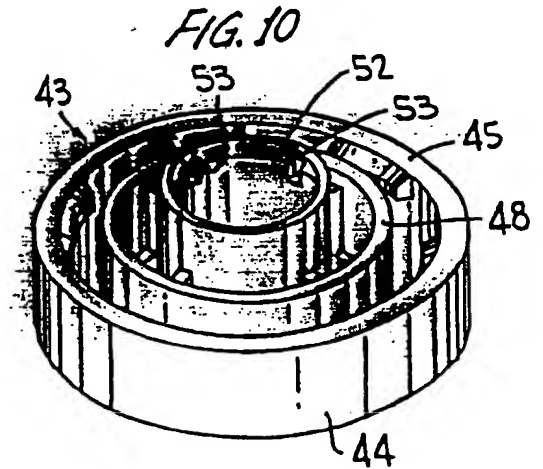
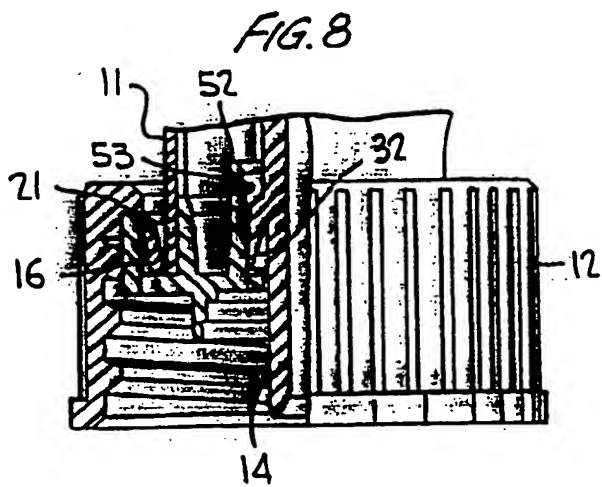
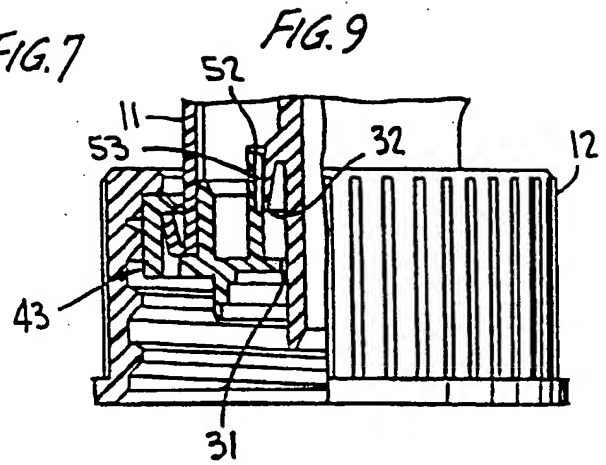
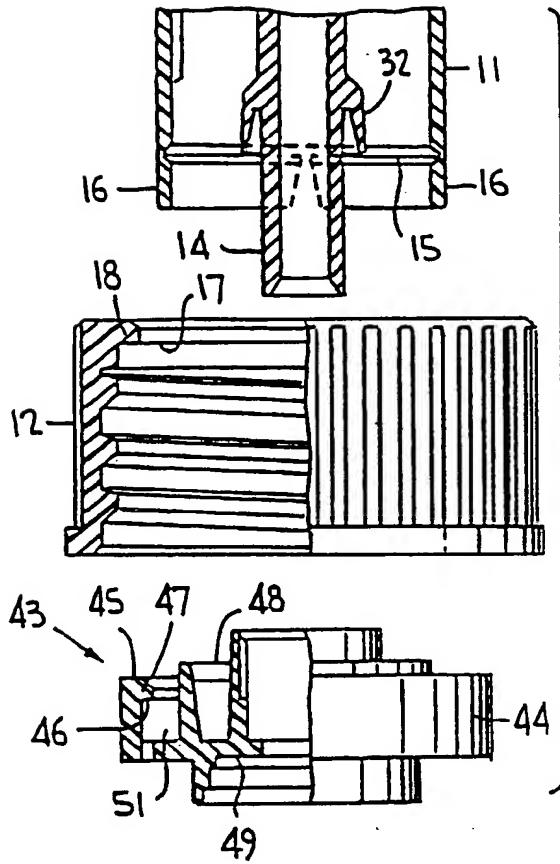
From the foregoing it can be seen that a simple and economical yet highly effective assembly for non-removably fixing a closure cap to a dispenser body is provided by simply folding the lower end section of the annular attaching portion of the dispensing pump body, outwardly or inwardly. The folded lower end section snap-fits to either the closure or to a plug which has a multiplicity of functions. The attaching portion of the dispenser therefore need not be specially molded as it is essentially cylindrical thereby reducing costs and complexity of assembly. The plugs used in the present assemblies are multi-functional in facilitating snap-fit engagement, functioning as a container vent, and as a gasket seal.

Obviously, many other modifications and variations could be effected by one skilled in the art without departing from the scope and the spirit of this invention, as defined by the appended claims. For example, a container closure may be non-removably snap-fitted to a dispenser having a horizontally or angularly disposed reciprocable piston, without departing from the invention. And, the closure, after being fixed to the pump body, can be designed for relative rotation within the teachings of the invention.

Claims

1. A dispenser comprising, a body having a cylindrical attaching portion (11), a closure cap (12) non-removably affixed to said attaching portion (11) and having means engageable with a container neck for mounting the dispenser (10) thereto, said cap (12) having an internal retention lip (17) at one end, characterized in that a lower end section (16) of said attaching portion (11) is folded to define an end edge (21) facing outwardly of said closure (12), a plug (22) located within said closure (12) in engagement with said attaching portion (11) and with said closure (12), said folded lower end section (16) being snap-fitted to one of said plug (22) and said closure (12) for positively fixing said cap to said body.
2. The dispenser according to claim 1, characterized in that said lower end section (16) is folded outwardly, said end edge (21) engaging an underside (18) of said retention lip (17).
3. The dispenser according to claim 1, characterized in that said attaching portion (11) extends through a central opening of said closure (12), said plug (22) having an annular sleeve (25) extending into said attaching portion (11) and engaging an inner surface thereof.
4. The dispenser according to claim 1, characterized in that said attaching portion (11) extends through a central opening of said closure (12), said end edge (21) engaging an edge wall (38) on said plug (35) facing inwardly of said closure (12).
5. The dispenser according to claim 4, characterized in that said lower end section (16) is folded inwardly, said plug (35) having an annular sleeve (37) in engagement with said lower end section (16) of said attaching portion (11), said edge wall (38) being formed on an outer surface of said sleeve (37).
6. The dispenser according to claim 3, characterized in that said lower end section (16) is folded outwardly, said plug (22) engaging said retention lip (17).
7. The dispenser according to claim 4, characterized in that said plug (43) has an annular skirt (48) in engagement with an inner surface of said attaching portion (11), said skirt (48) being spaced inwardly of said annular edge to therewith define an annular groove (51) for the reception of said lower end section (16).
8. The dispenser according to claim 1, characterized in that said plug (22, 35, 43) has a transverse wall (23, 36, 49) and a skirt (28, 39, 52) on said wall (23, 36, 49) extending into engagement with said attaching portion (11), said skirt (28, 39, 52) having container vent means (29, 42, 53) thereon.
9. The dispenser according to claim 1, characterized in that a pump piston having a hollow piston stem (14) is mounted for reciprocation along a central axis of said attaching portion (11), a vent seal (32) on said stem (14) engageable with vent means (29, 42, 53) on said plug (22, 35, 43) for venting the container during piston reciprocation.
10. The dispenser according to claim 1, characterized in that a pump piston having a hollow piston stem (14) is mounted for reciprocation along a central axis of said attaching portion (11), a vent seal (41) on said plug (35) engageable with vent means on said stem (14) for venting the container during piston reciprocation.
11. The dispenser according to claim 1, characterized in that said plug (22, 35 43) has a transverse wall (23, 36, 49) with a central opening through which a hollow piston stem (14) extends during pumping, said wall (23, 36, 49) having means at said opening defining a vent path into the container.







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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 97 50 0002

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.Cl.6)
A	EP 0 302 994 A (TADA ATSUSHI) * column 6, line 57 - column 7, line 51; figures 1-3 *	1	B05B11/00
A	US 4 606 480 A (RODRIGUEZ GAZULLA FRANCISCO) * column 3, line 46 - line 58 * * column 6, line 52 - column 7, line 43; figures *	1	
A	EP 0 484 615 A (COSTER TECNOLOGIE SPECIALI SPA) * column 2, line 40 - line 57 * * column 4, line 5 - line 8; figures *	1	
A	GB 2 119 868 A (ETHYL PROD) * figures 1,2 *	1	
A	US 5 507 418 A (DOBBS DOUGLAS B ET AL) * column 2, line 40 - line 54; figures *	1	
A	WO 96 14938 A (SPRAYSOL GMBH ; THANISCH KLAUS (DE); NATERSKY KLAUS (DE)) * page 6, line 15 - line 28; figure 6A *	1	TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.Cl.6)
A	US 4 469 234 A (DEUSSEN WERNER)		B05B B65D
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 25 March 1998	Examiner Brévier, F
<p>CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS</p> <p>X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document</p> <p>T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document</p>			

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